



Promoting the wise use of land

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING  
STAFF REPORT**

**Planning Commission**

MEETING DATE October 13, 2016	CONTACT/PHONE Terry Wahler, 781-5621	APPLICANT David Warren Ranch/ Dawn Dunlap	FILE NO. AGP2015-00009
<b>SUBJECT</b> Proposal by David Warren Ranch/Dawn Dunlap to establish an agricultural preserve to enable the applicant to enter into a land conservation contract for two discontiguous properties. The properties consist of approximately 1,326 acres within the Rural Lands and Agriculture land use categories. The southern property is located approximately 4.0 miles east of Cambria on Cinnabar Rock Trail, approximately 1.0 mile north of Santa Rosa Creek Road and the northern property is located approximately 8.0 miles north east of Cambria and 4.0 miles north of Santa Rosa Creek Road extending northerly approximately 2.3 miles. Both properties are in the Adelaida Sub-area of the North County planning area.			
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION</b> Recommend approval of this request to establish an agricultural preserve to the Board of Supervisors as follows:  <b>Preserve Designation: Cambria Agricultural Preserve No. 47</b> <b>Minimum Parcel Size: 320 Acres</b> <b>Minimum Term of Contract: 20 Years</b>			
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION</b> A Categorical Exemption (Class 17)			
LAND USE CATEGORY Rural Lands & Agriculture	COMBINING DESIGNATION Geologically Sensitive Area	ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER 014-071-016, 040 & 041; 014-061-022, 032 & 033; 080-141-008; 080-171-014 & 015	SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) 2
PLANNING AREA STANDARDS: None Applicable		LAND USE ORDINANCE STANDARDS: Section 22.22.040 – Minimum parcel size for Agriculture land use category (new agricultural preserves)	
EXISTING USES: Grazing			
SURROUNDING LAND USE CATEGORIES AND USES: <i>North:</i> Agriculture / Rangeland <i>East:</i> Agriculture & Rural Lands / Rangeland <i>South:</i> Agriculture / Rangeland <i>West:</i> Agriculture & Rural Lands / Rangeland			
OTHER AGENCY / ADVISORY GROUP INVOLVEMENT: None			
TOPOGRAPHY: Moderately to very steeply sloping		VEGETATION: Oak trees, chaparral, grasses, riparian	
PROPOSED SERVICES: None required		ACCEPTANCE DATE: April 12, 2016	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & BUILDING AT: COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER – SAN LUIS OBISPO – CALIFORNIA 93408 – (805) 781-5600 – FAX: (805) 781-1242			

## PROJECT REVIEW

### Background

The 1,326 acre property is part of the original Warren family ranch and has historically been used as grazing land. The current grazing operation supports 70 to 80 head of cattle and is managed by the landowner. The ranch is surrounded by other rangeland properties.

### Site and Area Characteristics

The property is located between Santa Rosa Creek Road and San Simeon Creek Road, northeast of Cambria and south of Lime Mountain in an area of extensive range land.

The ranch has both extensive open areas with grassland and some steeply sloping hillsides with areas of dense chaparral and oak trees. The property includes spring-fed stock ponds and troughs. The property is also served by intermittent creeks that provide water during wetter periods of the year.

The following table shows the Natural Resources Conservation Service soils rating of the site:

Land Capability Class		Irrigated Crop Suitability	Rangeland Suitability	Dry Farm Suitability	Acres
If Irrigated	Non-Irrigated				
III	III	NA	well suited	NA	15
IV	IV	NA	well suited	NA	88
VI	VI	NA	well suited	NA	20
VI	VI	NA	moderately suited	NA	157
VII	VII	NA	moderately suited	NA	369
VII	VII	NA	poorly suited	NA	404
VIII	VIII	NA	NA	NA	273
				Total	1326

Exhibit A shows the location, topography, and land use designations of the site and adjacent properties.

### Compliance with the Rules of Procedure for Agricultural Preserves

The Williamson Act allows for discontinuous properties to be placed under a single agricultural preserve and land conservation if they meet eligibility standards on a collective basis. The Rules of Procedure includes the following provision:

**“Property consisting of discontinuous parcels.** Discontinuous parcels under one ownership may qualify for, or be added to, a single agricultural preserve if they collectively meet the criteria in B1a, b and c, and are operated as a single agricultural enterprise. Agricultural enterprises on two or more discontinuous parcels under a single contract must be functionally operational on a collective basis to qualify.” [Section B.1.d.(4)]

The two discontinuous properties meet the above requirements since they function collectively as a single ranch.

The Rules of Procedure provide that a property (or properties) must first be under an Agricultural Preserve in order to qualify for a Land Conservation Contract as an individual property. The property meets the current eligibility requirements for a Range Land Agricultural Preserve with over 320 acres of gross acreage (1,326 acres) and over 100 acres (649 acres) of Class III, IV, VI, and VII soil listed as “moderately to well suited” as range land.

The property is also eligible for a Land Conservation Contract because it exceeds the minimum 320 acres required for range land contracts on 6 and 7 (or better) soils and has well over 100 acres of of Class III, IV, VI, and VII soil listed as “moderately to well suited” as range land by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The appropriate minimum parcel size for the Land Conservation Contract is 320 acres and the appropriate minimum term of contract is 20 years because the site is not located within 1 mile of an urban reserve line, as specified by the Rules of Procedure.

#### **Agricultural Preserve Review Committee (APRC)**

The following is an excerpt from the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Agricultural Preserve Review Committee held on June 20, 2016 at the SLO County Board of Supervisors Chambers, County Government Center, 1055 Monterey Street, Room D170, in San Luis Obispo, California, at 1:30 p.m.

Terry Wahler, staff: presents staff report and provides a Power Point presentation.

Committee members: discuss the request and begin their deliberations.

Hugh Pitts: asks if the southerly property would qualify independently and if so what the required size would be.

Terry Wahler responds that 320 acres would be needed to qualify separately.

Dick Nock: asks what the intent for this property is after being placed into preserve status with Mr. Wahler responding that the goal is long term conservation.

Robert Sparling: would like to know about access to the property with Mr. Wahler explaining how the property is accessed.

Joan Schleicher: further explains how the property is accessed.

Bill Robeson, Chairman: opens Public Comment with no one coming forward.

Thereafter, on motion of Dick Nock, seconded by Lynda Auchinachie and on the following roll call vote:

AYES: Dick Nock, Don Warden, Jon Pedotti, Hugh Pitts, Lynda Auchinachie, Jeff Stranlund, Paul Hoover, Bill Robeson, Robert Sparling, and Mary Bianchi

NOES: None

ABSENT: Jennifer Anderson, Kaila Dettman, and Lynn Moody

The Review Committee moved to recommend the Board of Supervisors approve this request to establish an agricultural preserve to enable the applicant to enter into a land conservation contract for two discontiguous properties. Preserve Designation: Cambria Agricultural Preserve No. 47. Minimum Parcel Size: 320 acres. Minimum term of contract: 20 years.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Recommend approval of this request to establish an agricultural preserve to the Board of Supervisors as follows:

<b>Preserve Designation:</b>	<b>Cambria Agricultural Preserve No. 47</b>
<b>Minimum Parcel Size:</b>	<b>320 Acres</b>
<b>Minimum Term of Contract:</b>	<b>20 Years</b>

## **FINDINGS**

- A. The proposed establishment of this agricultural preserve is consistent with the San Luis Obispo County General Plan, including the Land Use Element, Agriculture Element, the Conservation and Open Space Element, and the county's Rules of Procedure to Implement the California Land Conservation Act of 1965.
- B. The proposed establishment of this agricultural preserve is appropriate and consistent with the rural character of the surrounding area.

Report prepared by Terry Wahler  
Land Conservation Program  
and reviewed by Karen Nall